

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (#26-49)

"Praise be Jesus Christ, True God and True Man, Now and Forever. Amen."

Joy to be here today (September 22, 1998) Spiritual Year Seminarians

I. Introduction *August 27, 2000* *August 29, 2002*
 August 31, 2001 *August 28, 2003*
 August 26, 2004

A. Names of Seminarians

B. Background in Philosophy- please ask questions or offer insights in dialogue

C. Structure of section 26-49- Table of Contents (#26)

1. Where placed: Pt. I, Section I, Chapter 1 (important)
2. Chapter 1: Man's Capacity for God in relation to Chapter 2: God Comes to Meet Man and Chapter 3: Man's Response to God (1st of a threefold movement)
 - a. note words of movement: 1. desire, ways of coming to know, knowledge, and speaking all of God
 - b. in relation to 2: God coming to meet, revealing, Christ Jesus mediating, divine revelation transmitting, Scripture inspiring, Holy Spirit interpreting
 - c. in relation to 3: man responding in faith and in knowledge

D. Treasure of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*- explore using image of the cross

1. Begin at the center (#27) read invoking gifts from above of the Holy Spirit, especially wisdom, understanding, knowledge, piety, counsel, fear of the Lord, and fortitude.

- a. pick out key phrases or words that leap out of the page as personalized
 - b. e.g. i. The desire for God is written in my human heart
 - ii. I am created by God and for God
 - iii. God never ceases to draw me to himself
 - iv. Only in God will I find truth and happiness
 - v. My dignity is rests in the fact that I am called to communion with God
 - vi. from the very moment I come into being.
 - vii. God created me in love and through love holds me in existence
 - viii. I can not live fully according to the truth unless I freely acknowledge that love
 - ix. and freely entrust myself to my creator.

2. Follow out the cross references:

- a. e.g. #355 In the image of God- go to #356 only man is able to know and to love his creator." Ponder how?

- i. intellect ordered to truth and knowledge
 - ii. will ordered to choosing the good
 - iii. heart, the center of the person, ordered to love

- b. e.g. #1718 The natural desire for happiness is placed in us by God in order to draw us to Him who alone can fill it with His Beatitude

3. Follow out the footnote references:

- a. e.g. *Gaudium et Spes* 19 #1
- b. see *Companion* #29. Places the paragraph in the broader context of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council.
 1. Quotation concerns creation
 2. Rest of the entry in the *Companion* concerns the fallen state of the world
- c. we will return to this later in this section , but will follow the rhythm set out in the document and discuss our human nature as created, in its fallen state, and redeemed state

II. How are we created with a capacity for communion with God?

A. Our human nature has a great dignity- created in image and likeness of God/ #33--# **#1703 and 1700**.

B. Jesus Christ took on our human nature- He was like us in everything but sin. He reveals us to ourselves. #1701--- *Gaudium et Spes* #22

1. Obligation to come to know our human nature- spiritual/material (soul/body) unity #27---355---362 and 365-
2. Come to make choices to bring it to the perfection it was created for #33--# **1730-1731**

C. #35 ""Man's faculties make him capable of coming to a knowledge of the existence of a personal God."

1. Faculty of intellect (theoretical reason and practical reason)
 - a. object is the truth
 - b. the mind, like radar, is always searching for truth - but it can only receive according to the mind of the receiver- limits what is received
 - c. #31- called to know God-two ways:
 - i. from his works (message of creation) **46-47**
 - ii. from voice of conscience and by natural light of reason **46-47---**
"Conscience is a judgment of reason whereby...#1778
 - d. Theological virtue of faith perfects the intellect-it reveals to us that Jesus Christ is the truth (Garrigou-Lagrange -St. Thomas- John of the Cross, Karol Wojtyla) **1814**
 - e. #35 need faith to enter into a real intimacy with God
 - f. God is True

2. Faculty of will

- a. object is the good- the will engages in making a choice- it goes out of the self in choosing
- b. #31- called to love God
- c. freely and totally
- d. Theological virtue of charity perfects the will- **1827**
- e. God is Good

3. Powers of sensation, memory- the interior passions
 - a. external senses: see, hear etc. world's beauty and order- store them in the memory
 - b. #32- beginning with the senses can come to a knowledge of God through the exercise of reason
 - c. the interior passions (11 identified by St. Thomas: including desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, fear, daring, anger, etc.)
 - d. #31- our longings for happiness
 - e. Theological virtue of hope- perfects the desires and the memory- 1817ff
 - f. God is Beautiful

4. The heart
 - a. depth of our being where we encounter God and where we decide for or against God 368- also 1776: conscience "sounds in his heart" and #1777 "moral conscience present at the heart of the person.."
 - b. summary: #30- "...this search for God demands of man every effort of intellect, a sound will, an upright heart, and witness of others..."
 1. read from footnote to #30- Augustine's *Confessions*, Book I, chapt. 1, paragraphs 2 and 3.
 - c. center of unity- God is One

III. What is the fallen condition of human nature in the world?

- A. Disorder in faculties #37 (last three sentences of quote from HG)
 1. Intellect dimmed and prone to error
 2. Will weakened and prone to make poor choices
 3. Passions disordered and focused on self-love rather than love of God or neighbour
- B. Rupture between men and God- forms of atheism.
 1. #29- leading to GS #19-21 (footnote)
 - leading to #2123-2138

IV. How are we led back to God by natural faculties?

- A. #36- The natural light of reason---Companion footnote DS- a capacity given to us as created in image of God
 1. Prove God is first principle- origin
 Contingent existence must be sustained by necessary existence
 St. Thomas' five ways- first mover, first efficient cause, necessary existence, cause of all perfections (actuality), cause of governance or order in world
 2. Prove God is last end
 Only God can fulfil orientation of desire for happiness
 Intellect filled with Beatific Vision (Truth)
 Will filled with Beatitude (Goodness)

B. language-

1. limited because God transcends all creatures #42 ---#300
2. yet it does "really attain to God himself" analogically = similar but dissimilar; what He is and what He is not (St. Thomas: *Summa Theologica*- analogical predication for names of God- Pt. 1, Q 13-art 5
3. we can name God starting from perfections of creation- Good, True, One, Beautiful, Love, He Who Is #42---212ff, 300.

St. Thomas: *Summa Contra Gentiles I, 30*: Highest Good, First Being
St. Thomas: *Summa Theologica I,I* Method, Content-

V. Need for Revelation to complete natural knowledge

- A. To know God is a Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- B. To know Father is Creator, Jesus Christ is Redeemer, and Holy Spirit- Love/Gift Sanctifier
- C. To enter into intimate personal relation with Holy Trinity through the perfection of charity-
- D. To share this with the communion of saints- in likeness to the Holy Trinity